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THE SOUTH AFTER THE WAR

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THE South, by whatever comparative test, will emerge from this war with more social change and more unfinished business than any other section of the country. It will have fewer share-croppers, but more welders and pipefitters. It will have an agriculture with relatively less plowing and hoeing, but more sowing and mowing. It will have more interest in good cattle and green pastures. It will have more industry and industrial capital, with less rural isolation and more urban sophistication. In the language of Donald Nelson, it will have more of the indispensable managerial "know-how." It will have more than a million men and women in the ranks of organized labor. It will have a Negro population with varied new skills and war experience on or beyond the seven seas. It will know a standard of living for the common man that was undreamt of in its prewar philosophy.

This region will have a few headaches along with its hopes. It will not be easy to cushion the business disruption that

will accompany the withdrawal or drastic reduction of the personnel in the large military establishments which have spread over the South. This will affect wholesale and retail merchandizing, hotels and restaurants, and a host of service activities. It will take more than wishful thinking or efforts of individual Congressmen to convert expansive ordnance plants, powder factories, and munition depots into peacetime establishments with commensurate employment. It will be impossible to continue the great shipbuilding program which the war brought to the Gulf Coast and to the South's Atlantic ports, with giant payrolls and population gains as illustrated by Mobile County, Alabama, where the increase was 69 per cent from the census of 1940 to February, 1943. The inevitable curtailment of wartime airplane production will drastically affect the operation of this industry's branch plants in the South.

It cannot be too pointedly observed that a disproportionately large segment of the South's wartime industry will offer extreme difficulties and impossibilities for conversion to serve civilian demands in times of peace. Moreover, much of the region's war business represents sub-contracting, branch-plant expansion, and marginal production. This falls largely into the class of "last hired and first fired." Cutbacks will tend to affect it early through the operation of economic forces independently of interregional discrimination. Certain members of the Senate committee on small business are rightly disturbed over this prospect.

Cotton farming and cotton textiles are important to this region in both war and peace. But the South cannot return to its traditional reliance on cotton economy in the face of national and world competition from other fibers and in the face of competition from non-American cotton. Even under the most favorable conditions, cotton could not meet our modern demands for employment and living standards, not to mention the significant factor of soil exhaustion. It will require more than cotton, its processing, and its by-products

for the South to hold its own in the American economic procession—more than cotton and tobacco, too.

The real postwar hope for Southern economic expansion lies in the diversified development of physical and human resources in the creation of goods and services that will constitute a net addition to the nation's total sum of goods and services, with the South at the same time increasing its own consumption *pari passu* with its increased production.

The South has many products in the earth, including coal, iron, petroleum, and sulphur, which the South and the nation need. Trees grow faster in the South than elsewhere in America, and these trees go into naval stores, lumber, furniture, paper, and other useful products, with new possibilities in the realm of plywood and plastics. Timber is spread widely over the South, and a substantial amount grows on farms. There are now hundreds of millions of sustained income from the combined timber industries through the practice of scientific conservation, cultivation, and selective cutting. With proper safeguarding, there is a regional fortune in this growing timber as well as aids to soil protection and stream control.

In addition to its timber and minerals, the South can bank on "white coal" through the actual and potential development of hydro-electric power. This is made possible by a combination of mountains and rivers, with an adequate rainfall. The Tennessee Valley Authority has demonstrated how cheap electricity can pay its own way through increased consumption by municipalities, rural co-operatives, old and new industries, and defense projects. The TVA program has constituted a solid contribution to the economic life of the Valley. It has been the prime factor in the setting up of high-class industrial plants in the South, significantly during the war. David E. Lilienthal, chairman of the TVA directorate, has a basis of experience and insight for his prophecy of a greater rôle for the TVA and a more abundant life for the South after the war. Adaptations of the

TVA multiple-purpose plan might be applied to other Southern river valleys. This has been officially proposed for the Coosa-Alabama river system, which, as a stream, ranks next to the Tennessee in the Southeast.

There is a great future for the South in the utilization of its scenic, climatic, and recreational resources, and these resources do not wear out like the soil. The South's mountain, stream, shore, and sunshine together suggest recreation, vacationing, and the pursuits of leisure in summer or winter. Tourists were bringing hundreds of millions of dollars annually into the Southern states before the soldiers came, the estimate being \$104,000,000 for Tennessee alone in 1941. The tourist tribe should increase after the war. The industrialization of society increasingly requires plans and provisions for rest and recreation. The region of military campgrounds in time of war should become a greater region of civilian playgrounds in time of peace. Aside from bringing in tourist dollars, the recreational facilities will enrich the lives of Southerners themselves. The South has always emphasized sports, a sense of leisure, and the art of living. It can lead the nation in providing and sharing all-year play.

The improvement of recreational facilities, the production of hydro-electric energy, and the conservation of timber as well as land are harmoniously interrelated and can be developed together. They have been developed together by the TVA in co-operation with Valley states, counties, municipalities, private interests, and other Federal agencies. On properties of the Authority there are nineteen parks, chiefly under lease to state and local governments, and some forty fishing camps and boat docks, which are operated by private citizens under licensed arrangements. H. K. Menhinick, of the TVA staff, suggests that there are needs and opportunities for investing 440 million dollars over the next ten years in recreational development centering on the Tennessee and Cumberland river valleys and the Southern Highlands. He observes that this might be divided about equally

between public and private investment, the public funds going into parks, roads, trails, other basic facilities, and protection for game and fish.

The South, by its geography and geographical resources, is in direct line to share abundantly in three revolutions which are in process and which will be accelerated after the war. These revolutions consist of (1) the expansion of the use of timber and timber products under the amazing impact of applied science; (2) the expansion of the production of electricity with its application to varied new uses in providing goods and services; and (3) the increasing importance of recreational facilities in the machine age, with more and more recognition of this fact by public authorities and private citizens.

These changes or expansions will continue to affect the South. But, if the sharing is to be full and wholesome, there must be co-operative policy-making and administrative action on the part of national, state, and local governments. Conservation, river and water power development, and great open spaces for recreation cannot be left to private enterprise or handled within a policy of states' rights. Governor Arnall, of Georgia, has aptly urged a shift of emphasis from states' rights to states' responsibilities. This observation is prophetic for the postwar South, which will have and desire close ties with the national government as great public programs take shape in the Southern region. The South will fare better under a sympathetic national administration with progressive leanings, and more so by meeting such an administration half way and on the level. With extensive absentee ownership and control of its private industry, the South will fare the worst under a reactionary policy of laissez-faire or minimum government.

Along with a reorientation toward governmental relations, the South is also going through a somewhat painful process of reorientation in the sphere of labor relations. In the first place, there is a steady shrinkage in the wage dif-

ferential between North and South, as in various other interregional differentials, whether in freight rates, interest rates, cost of living or productivity. This tendency, which was speeded by the war, will continue after the war, and the whole body of differentials may fittingly have the epitaph of the little dog named Rover, "When he died, he died all over." As a New England economist has shrewdly observed, no Republican Congress would seek to arrest the wage differential shrinkage.

Labor unionism is going to hold its own in the South about as effectively as elsewhere in America. There are in the South today able labor leaders who command respect and furnish no targets for Westbrook Pegler to shoot at. That class would include both AF of L and CIO officials as well as others. William Mitch, of Birmingham, is influential as a mining union spokesman of ability and integrity. There are Southern intellectuals and New Dealers who have gone over actively to the labor movement, among them C. B. Baldwin and George Mitchell, who once were the top two officials of the Farm Security Administration. Mitchell, Rhodes scholar, author, and former university instructor in economics, is the regional director in Atlanta of the CIO Committee on Political Action. Miss Lucy Randolph Mason, a native Virginian, with plenty of Revolutionary ancestral blood, is Southern public relations representative for the CIO.

Labor is winning more access to political inner circles in Southern industrial districts. Boss Crump's machine in Memphis has abandoned labor-baiting practices. Important Southern employers have spoken favorably of the place of organized labor in industry. One of these is A. J. Higgins, the shipbuilding wizard of New Orleans. When the war is over, there may be increased appreciation of the purchasing power of high wages in the South, which, because of extra-regional features in its economy, has more stake than the North in payrolls as compared with returns from

capital. Whatever the labor frictions today or the industrial problems of peace, there will be no "back to normalcy" in Southern labor relations. It is possible for this region, the last to be widely affected by unionism, to experience a stabilization process with escape from many of the labor evils and mistakes of other regions and other times.

Falling within and without the labor picture is the problem of race relations in the South. Informed observers see a postwar crisis. Negroes can point to significant social gains in the last six years, thanks to Negro leadership, the Supreme Court, the New Deal, the CIO, and the war, with its manpower needs affecting all races and with a United Nations' emphasis on interracial democracy. This development has put much of the white South in a paradoxical dilemma, with forward thinking in international affairs and backward thinking in interracial affairs. One horn of the dilemma will have to go. Science, statistics, and ethics oppose extravagant assumptions of "white supremacy." The Southern cultural pattern will have to change, as has the American constitutional system, to permit more economic, educational, and political opportunity to Southern Negroes, whose Northern brothers have an important strategic voting power. There is no hope for a prewar status quo through either national political party.

There is no permanent solution or fixed pattern for race relations in the South. But there is a good prospect for adjustments between the limits staked out by the two sets of extremists, white and colored. Such an approach is being sought by able Southern leaders of both races. This group includes Charles S. Johnson, of Fisk University, R. F. Clement and Ira de A. Reid, of Atlanta University, F. D. Patterson, of Tuskegee, and many other Negroes. It includes editors and publishers like Virginius Dabney, of Richmond, Ralph McGill, of Atlanta, Mark Ethridge, of Louisville, and many others among the whites. John Temple Graves, Birmingham columnist, is a sympathetic observer

who insists on making haste slowly. Credit for important, if less conspicuous, work belongs to newspaper men in smaller cities, like Harry M. Ayers, of the *Anniston* (Alabama) *Star*. Jim Crow practices are yielding in labor unions. Negroes have become members and officers of the Southern Sociological Society, councils of social agencies, and organizations of social workers. Between World Wars I and II yeoman work, largely through educators and church workers, was performed by the Commission on Interracial Co-operation, which Will W. Alexander directed dynamically from an Atlanta office. This organization has recently gone out of existence to give way to a set-up of larger scope, the Southern Regional Council, with Howard W. Odum, North Carolina sociologist, as president. In "Race and Rumors of Race," Odum and a group of associates have run down and exposed a carload of wild reports, exaggerated facts, and plain lies about racial strife. Incidentally, many of these rumors have perished, with an accompanying reduction in wartime racial tension. In spite of demagogic storm clouds, the South can weather the racial crisis. It will have to, whether the maid returns or not.

Cutting through all economic and social relations in the postwar South, will be the central problem of community life and organization. There may be disorganization and disintegration in the environs of the ordnance town of Milan, Tennessee, of the powder-plant center of Childersburg, Alabama, and of similar towns where war industries increased the population several times. Boom towns turned to ghost towns in cotton fields are not lovely to contemplate. The withdrawal of Federal aids and administrative controls in health, sanitation, other services, and law enforcement can lead to serious troubles in numerous stranded communities which sprang up in wartime.

Many Southern communities had already gone through stages of disintegration before the war came. This was partly conditioned by the extensive migration within and out of

the South, particularly from rural districts, with a reverse movement back to the land in the worst years of the Great Depression. It was complicated by the high degree of racial dualism in community organization, with inadequate attention to public services for Negroes. It was intensified for the countryside by an unstable farm tenant system, with a heavy turnover between farm and farm, between community and community. A further influence that weakened community ties was the suffrage restriction affecting both races in the South in the twentieth century.

The war has brought economic activity to many a rural community in the South without restoring its civic unity or civic spirit. This is true of my native Possum Trot in the hills of a North Alabama industrial district. Members of that neighborhood go out daily in different directions to work at distances ranging from four to fifty miles. Practically every farm family furnishes one or more industrial workers or shares rooms with industrial workers or rents a house to an industrial worker. Agriculture and industry are fused into a human balance, but organized social life is sadly lacking, much more than was the case fifty years ago. When the war is over, there will be serious need for a plan for Possum Trot or for the people of Possum Trot, for productive employment and for participation in recreational activities and other phases of the good life. Possum Trot cannot save itself in isolation. It is linked up with the agriculture, the industry, and the rural-urban life of the Coosa Valley, which, in turn, is linked up with a larger region, the nation and the world.

Possum Trot multiplied hundreds of times gives a picture of much of the problem and the promise of the South. It is essential to develop the physical and human resources of such communities, not exploit them or neglect them, if the postwar South is to prosper. A wider application of the three revolutions referred to would help Possum Trot, where there is more hoping for actual farm income and for the

wages of labor than concern over "free enterprise." That neighborhood has freedom. It needs provisions for co-operative living.

Freighted with its large problems and potentialities in economic and human relations, the South is coming to the end of the war with the greatest need for statesmanship and leadership since 1865. This need applies to all levels of government, local, state, and the region's contingent in the national branches. It calls for active co-operation among these governments, not conflict or negation. It calls for political-administrative ability, which the South has in the states and at Washington. It calls for a social vision, which is lacking in many important Southerners in high places from Virginia to Texas. Some of these need to realize that the fruits of the twentieth century do not yield to harvesting tools of the eighteenth or early nineteenth.

There is ground for hope in a young governor like Ellis Arnall, of Georgia, who has made real headway with modernizing his state's constitution, reforming the penitentiary system, depoliticalizing the state's system of higher education, and seeking a wider use of educators in the development of the state. There are Southern Congressmen who reflect social awareness and prefer no truck with reaction. Among these are Kefauver, Priest, and Gore, of Tennessee; Worley and Lyndon Johnson, of Texas; Ramspeck, of Georgia; and Hays, of Arkansas, to mention only a few. The South has relatively fewer progressive Senators, with Hill, of Alabama, and Pepper, of Florida, running into a serious battle for renomination. These Roosevelt supporters turned back stiff opposition in the May primaries. However, the South has a group of able conservative Senators, who perform a useful function in handling financial and constitutional issues. These men can be effective in any administration. Many Southerners in both houses have acted realistically in foreign affairs and preparedness measures, both before and after Pearl Harbor. The Southeast-

ern governors gave early support to the lend-lease program. Unfortunately, the South has too many spokesmen who are ready to filibuster against progress.

Many Southern states can face postwar problems with recent administrative improvements, as in merit systems, expert services, and the reorganization of local governments.

The Southern Governors' Conference, as well as the TVA, has effectively expounded the need of Southern manufacturers, especially the smaller ones, for lower freight rates to move their products to distant markets. Certain changes have resulted, and more may follow. These gains should stimulate the production of high quality goods in the postwar South, especially with labor more skilled and efficient than ever. The Governors' Conference is also urging a propaganda of progress toward a balanced agriculture and a balance between agriculture and industry. It is on a logical track in working for diversified farming and decentralized industries in a region of cheap and abundant electric power.

One might wish that Southern governors and other public leaders would give more substantial attention to the welfare of that group of farmers whom the Farm Security Administration has aided with wholesome results. A large part of the South's economy after the war will continue to depend upon production by small farmers with limited capital and with little contact with the Farm Bureau, the Extension Service, or the land grant colleges. It is important to consider them in postwar adjustments, particularly in land use planning, as is emphasized by John V. Van Sickle in his "Planning for the South." They deserve any gains that can come from dehydration, other types of processing, chemurgy, and the like.

The South has perhaps more than its share of die-hard reactionaries among industrialists, professional and business leaders, and wealthy farmers. But there are contrary and offsetting signs among these groups. A Georgia in-

dustrialist last winter told a Vanderbilt University conference of business men and educational leaders, in effect, that it is good business to facilitate the Negro's participation in the economic system. A university business college dean told this same conservative group that our business interests after the war will have to get along with organized labor and fit into co-operation with an outside world that is far less conservative than America. Donald Comer, of Birmingham, and Edgar Stern, of New Orleans, are examples of outstanding business men who appreciate social trends and social controls. Southern chambers of commerce are going through a process of education on social problems in their study of postwar planning. They are getting into closer touch with government officials and educators. This is all to the good, whatever happens to the planning.

There are also Southern newspaper men who take democracy seriously and give it a modern application to the facts of life, among them Josephus Daniels, of Raleigh, J. E. Chappell, of Birmingham, Jennings Perry, of Nashville, Harnett Kane, of New Orleans, Tarleton Collier, of Louisville, and those mentioned for their interest in better race relations.

There are powerful forces in Southern opinion that would have a reconversion from the social gains of recent years to country-club democracy. I hope they are not so sinister as the bold editors of *South Today* would have us believe. But they are seriously to be reckoned with in their opposition to suffrage expansion, either by state or national action; in their vitriolic attacks on government planning and planners; in their criticisms of two of the Four Freedoms; or in their willingness to use a demagogue like Talmadge for their own purposes. If they have their way, that way will not be good for the South, which has the most to gain and the least to lose in economic democracy.

The South's greatest need for leadership and statesmanship after the war will be in education. Only through edu-

cation and continuous training can the wartime gains in industrial science, technical ability, and vocational skills be maintained and expanded. Only in that way can Southern agriculture hold its own and improve in a complex world. Only in that way can community disintegration be retarded or reversed. Only in that way can demagoguery and political spoils or privilege be prevented in favor of government that is efficient and democratic.

Since it is the region of the greatest proportion of children and of unschooled adults, the South needs more education upward, downward, and outward. This is needed, not only for civic and cultural values, but for a sustained capacity to produce and consume. Educated communities or regions produce more and consume more. The South cannot prosper by selling the bare necessities and a few gadgets to unskilled laborers and sharecropper farmers.

It is urgent that educational services in agriculture be more widely extended to reach non-voting farmers. It is essential that our higher institutions move more realistically into the study of the community problems around their centers. The whole set of problems connected with labor and organized labor calls for greater attention on a factual basis. The labor movement in recent years has taken on more intellectual content than many educators seem to realize. Labor unions are actively interested in the study of economics, contemporary affairs, parliamentary law, writing, public speaking, and dramatics, as well as training in productive skills. This interest should be utilized. There are also returning soldiers.

This job of education calls for more funds from all sources, communities, states, the Federal government, and any possible private channels. It calls for co-operation on the part of all agencies able to aid in the undertaking. It also calls for independence for educators and assumption of responsibility by educators. This is important for the colleges and universities, which, in their serious need for more sources of

income, run the risk of pressure from political or economic quarters or both. President E. E. Day, of Cornell University, gave warning on this point in a discussion of the closer relations between education, business, and government last winter at Nashville. As Southern institutions need funds as acutely as any, there is reason for real concern to preserve their independence.

Southern educators can have independence, if they will. In critical tests in recent years their will has prevailed. Bilbo discovered that he could not have his way with the educational system in Mississippi, particularly the state University. In Georgia, Talmadge met a clear defeat when he undertook to interfere politically with the University of Georgia. The Crump machine in Memphis found out that a local state college could not be disturbed without serious disadvantage to the machine, since an unrecognized institution was a drawback. A group of professors at the University of Texas, investigated for their social views by a legislative committee, took a firm stand and remained at the University. On other occasions attacks and pressures have been repulsed, in state and private institutions. This can and should be true after the war, if the occasion arises. Seemingly innocent issues can easily arise in these days of myriad synthetic products, as was exemplified at Iowa State College some months ago when dairy interests turned on the heat because of a bulletin containing favorable words on oleomargarine. The South, with its possibilities in new products and new processing, is sure to have conflicts of interest that will have to be faced by research educators, either independently or subserviently. The postwar period will bring on other problems in the field of taxation, state administration, regulation, and social security for the South. There will be bristling issues of social relations to challenge the changing South and its institutions of learning. If this region is to prosper, these issues must be met, not with evasion, but with courage, imagination, and social intelligence.